

FROM THE AUTHOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLING
BLOODLINE OF THE HOLY GRAIL

GENESIS OF THE GRAIL KINGS



THE EXPLOSIVE STORY
OF GENETIC CLONING
AND THE ANCIENT
BLOODLINE OF JESUS

LAURENCE
GARDNER

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Also by Laurence Gardner
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THE EXPLOSIVE STORY OF GENETIC CLONING
AND THE ANCIENT BLOODLINE OF JESUS

LAURENCE GARDNER

E L E M E N T

Boston, Massachusetts • Shaftesbury, Dorset
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*Dedicated to the memory of Lawrence Percy,
father and fellow traveller of the Grail highway*

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Laurence Gardner
August 1999



FOREWORD

In a genuine attempt to find answers to the problems and pressures of our modern age, many people are today seeking enlightenment from books which purport to convey the hidden mysteries of ancient wisdom. Unfortunately, there are numerous quasi-mystical and pseudo-magical offerings in this regard, and much of their dubious content stems from misconceptions of the root elements of the Draconian scientific tradition. This occurs because researchers, who might well study literature that is readily available in the public domain, do not have access to those archives wherein the original base material is held. They are, furthermore, not remotely connected to the ancient Dragon Court or to any of its related Grail families or institutions.

It pleases me, therefore, to convey to readers the fact that Laurence Gardner writes not as an uninitiated commentator, but as an extremely well-informed member of the time-honoured school upon which he so eloquently reports.

In *Genesis of the Grail Kings*, the author has imparted a good deal of ancient material from the archives of the Imperial and Royal Dragon Court, and has aligned this with a hitherto rarely published classical chronology of events in Old Testament times. The result is a work of scholarly integrity which advances a radically alternative view of history, challenging that which has for too long been foisted upon people by those following a predetermined course of vested interest.

The destiny of any individual depends upon whence they begin their journey and the path they elect, or are obliged, to travel. What pertains to individuals is also pertinent to society as a whole, and the conditions,

culture and ultimate achievements of society are marked by the inherent perceptions of its origin and purpose. Such perceptions are generally the result of an authorized education programme, but when this teaching is at odds with the underlying truth, a dichotomy of interests will prevail and the society will have no attainable goal except that of disunity and ultimate demise.

In this work, Laurence Gardner paves the way for a restitution of our society's true history and for the rightful return of its cultural heritage to the front line of conscious awareness. In view of this, and in recognition of his erudite accomplishment in restoring the Messianic Dragon tradition to its position as the *fons et origo*, I commend this text to all who quest for the eternal Grail.

HRH Prince Nicholas de Vere KGC, KCD
*Princeps Draconis, Sovereign Grand Master
and Magister Templi of Sarkany Rend
The Imperial and Royal Dragon Court and Order*

PREFACE

Genesis of the Grail Kings is the second book in a proposed Grail-related series, its predecessor being *Bloodline of the Holy Grail*. Although mutually supportive, these books are, however, designed to stand alone and, despite their sequence of publication, it is not necessary that they be read in any particular order of preference.

For the benefit of readers who are not familiar with *Bloodline of the Holy Grail*, it is worth stating that this work was chronologically structured upon the Bible's New Testament period and on the following 2000 years to the present day. In contrast, *Genesis of the Grail Kings* deals with far more ancient times, specifically centring upon the era of the first two books of the Old Testament. The common thread, nevertheless, is that the individual works are concerned with aspects of history from scriptural and cultural documents which were not included in the canonical Bible – those that were, in fact, omitted for various reasons of vested interest. Also taken into account are numerous other archival resources which have, for one reason or another, been strategically ignored by the authorized academic and clerical establishments through the centuries.

In pursuing this line of comparative research, it becomes clear that first-hand writings from any given period often have little in common with the interpretations and spurious rewritings of subsequent times – but it is from these later renderings and expositions that we are generally taught. Here, then, for those who are new to this series, is a brief summary of the main content of *Bloodline of the Holy Grail* – an overview that will illustrate the style and purpose of these correlative investigations.

Following the Jewish Revolt in Jerusalem in the first century AD, the Roman authorities were reputed to have burned all records (public and private) concerning the Davidic sovereign legacy of Jesus's family. However, the destruction was far from complete and relevant documents were retained by the royal inheritors, who progressed the heritage of the Messiah from the Holy Land into the West. These inheritors were called the *Desposyni* (heirs of the Lord) and they were pursued by Roman dictate, to be put to the sword by Imperial command. Writing as long afterwards as AD 200, the historian Julius Africanus confirmed that the persecution was still formally operative, although the *Desposyni* heirs, he said, remained politically active by way of 'a strict dynastic progression'.

After the decline of the Western Empire, the torment was continued by the emergent Church of Rome, despite appeals from the family who promoted the opposing Nazarene Church of Jesus. They constantly and openly denounced the Roman interpretations of the Virgin Birth and Resurrection, claiming that religion was to be found in the teachings of Jesus, not in the veneration of his person. Furthermore, they pronounced the Apostolic Succession of the Bishops of Rome to be a fraud, since it was claimed to have been handed down from Peter, the first Bishop of Rome. But Peter never held such an office in Rome or anywhere else. This is confirmed in the Church's own *Apostolic Constitutions*, which state that the first Bishop of Rome was Britain's Prince Linus (son of Caractacus the Pendragon), who was appointed by St Paul in AD 58, during Peter's lifetime.

Through the Dark Ages, support grew for the *Desposyni*, to the extent that they founded the great Celtic kingdoms of Britain and Europe. But they were still harassed by the Popes, who knew that, so long as the true bloodline of King David prevailed, their own contrived Apostolic descent was of no consequence. In medieval times, the Church managed to curtail Messianic supremacy in Gaul, but was later confronted by the adherent Knights Templars, the Guardians of the Sacred Sepulchre, and other powerful groups who supported the original family line – the line known as the Sangréal (the Blood Royal or Holy Grail). The result was the implementation of the brutal Holy Office (better known as the Catholic Inquisition), for only by suppressing the sovereignty of the Grail bloodline could the Church of Rome survive.

As the centuries progressed, so too did the ongoing conspiracy. This was the reason why so many important writings were not selected for New Testament inclusion; it was the reason why Arthurian

tradition was condemned by the bishops; it was the reason why the writings of Merlin were formally blacklisted at the 1545–63 Council of Trento; and it was the reason why the Merovingian and Stuart kings were hounded and deposed. Indeed, many quite separately regarded aspects of history were actually chapters of that same continuing suppression.

The Church's official attitude can be illustrated by a second-century statement from Bishop Clement of Alexandria. When having a section of the original Gospel of Mark removed from the public domain, he wrote: 'Not all true things are to be said to all men'. In writing this, he distinguished between the 'true truth' and the 'truth according to the faith', maintaining that the latter must always be preferred. The strategically deleted section of the Mark Gospel (which is still not included) made it perfectly clear that Jesus and Mary Magdalene were man and wife.

When the criteria for Gospel selection were determined at the Council of Carthage in AD 397, it was first stipulated that the authorized New Testament Gospels must be written in the names of the original twelve apostles. Matthew was, of course, an apostle, as was John, but neither Luke nor Mark were named in the original twelve. Thomas, on the other hand, was one of the original apostles and yet the Gospel in his name was excluded.

Of far more importance was the second criterion – the one by which the Gospel selection was truly made. This was a wholly sexist regulation which precluded anything that upheld the status of women in Church society. The Church's own *Precepts of Ecclesiastical Discipline* were drawn up with this in mind, stating: 'It is not permitted for a woman to speak in church . . . nor to claim for herself a share in any masculine function . . . for the head of the woman is the man'.

Indeed, in its attempt to suppress the marital status of Jesus, the Church of Rome became so frightened of women that a rule of celibacy was instituted for its priests – a rule which became a law in 1138 and which persists even today. But it was not as if the Bible had suggested any such thing. In fact, quite the reverse. St Paul had actually said (in his Epistle to Timothy) that a bishop should be married and should have children, for a man with experience in his own family household was far better qualified to take care of the Church.

Bloodline of the Holy Grail is not, however, restricted to family histories and tales of intrigue; its pages hold the key to the essential Grail Code of Messianic service. It is a book about good government and bad

government, telling of how the patriarchal kingship of people was supplanted by dogmatic tyranny and the dictatorial overlordship of lands. It is a journey of discovery through past ages, with its eye firmly set upon the future.

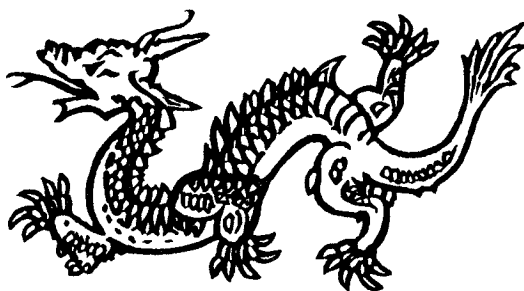
Now, in *Genesis of the Grail Kings*, we take a similar look at the Bible's Old Testament to evaluate why certain original books were ignored when the choices for inclusion were made. Once again, we discover a clear sexist strategy, wherein important women such as Miriam were sidestepped, just as Mary Magdalene was in later times. With the Old Testament, however, a far more powerful strategy was at work – a strategy which sought to break with all previous tradition by firmly cementing the 'male only' concept of God.

THE CRADLE OF CIVILIZATION

Dawn of the Dragon

In *Bloodline of the Holy Grail*, we considered the line of Messianic kingly descent from the family of Jesus – the dynastic bloodline which became known as the Sangréal (the Blood Royal). This was the line of King David of Judah, the family whose heirs, from the time of Jesus, were hounded by the Christian Church authorities for centuries. But what was it that made this sovereign line so special in the first place? What was the original legacy of their Messianic kingship – the legacy so feared by the orthodox establishment? By studying the pre-biblical texts, the answers to these questions are stunningly revealed, but not necessarily in a form that we might expect. No longer are Adam, Noah, Abraham and the well-known characters of Genesis a humble band of territorial pioneers; instead they emerge as a formidable cast of players in one of history's most enlightening portrayals, for it was they who witnessed the astonishing dawn of the Grail Kings – the original House of the Dragon.

From the very earliest of recorded times, dragons have featured at the forefront of cultural lore, where they have been portrayed in various conflicting guises. The ancient Greeks believed that dragons were benevolent creatures with the ability to convey the wisdom and secrets of life, while, in contrast, the early Hebrews saw dragons as the meddlesome purveyors of sin. The mighty dragon was the emblem of the Chinese Empire, being a national symbol of good fortune, and outside the Hebrew tradition dragons were generally seen as the guardians of universal knowledge and the benign protectors of humankind.



The Chinese Dragon.

To the Celtic races of Europe, the dragon was the ultimate symbol of sovereignty (hence, the Dark Age 'Pendragons': Head Dragons or Kings of Kings), but in AD 494 Pope Gelasius I¹ challenged the Celtic Church by canonizing a certain Bishop George of Alexandria, who was said to have slain a dragon.² This violent and unpopular Turkish churchman was reputed to have insulted and persecuted dissenters, and was eventually killed by a Palestinian mob in AD 361. He emerged, however, as the famous martyr St George, with surrounding legends that grew ever more exaggerated. At the Council of Oxford in 1222, it was proclaimed that St George's feast day should be 23 April, and in the fourteenth century he became the Catholic patron saint of England by decree of King Edward III Plantagenet.

From the fourth century, the Roman Church denounced and terrorized upholders of the Celtic Christian faith, and in this regard St George the dragon-slayer personified the vengeful Catholic inquisition against the supporters of the Messianic bloodline. The dragons of Christian mythology were adopted from those of the Hebrew tradition and are often portrayed with wings and breathing fire, but historically dragons were the epitome of the royal crocodile or sea-serpent (the *Bistea Neptunis* of the Dark Age Fisher Kings and the medieval Merovingian kings of the Franks³).

By way of a manipulated tradition in Western Christendom, the dragon has been portrayed rather differently from its original representation in the Eastern cultures. It has also been diverted into the realms of legend and mythology, whereas it was with the fat of the historical *Messeh* (the sacred dragon, or crocodile) that the Egyptian pharaohs were anointed upon coronation.⁴ It is an apparent fact that what one culture defines as history, another will define as mythology; this is

especially the case in religious affairs where opposing cultures are in spiritual conflict. Christians, for example, consider the deities of other beliefs to be mythical, but maintain that their own deity is not. The same might, of course, be said in reverse – so where in all of this lies the truth of that which is called ‘history’?

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines ‘history’ as the ‘continuous methodical record of important or public events’. Other reference books give similar definitions, and it is evident from these that the term ‘history’ does not constitute the events themselves, but relates to the documented records of the events. Sometimes these records are compiled first hand, and sometimes second or third hand, but whatever the case they are always subject to bias, opinion and vested interest. When history deals with matters of conflict, whether military, political, social or religious, then it becomes a device for conveying sectarian or national leaning, and the details of individual events vary in accordance with the attitudes, commissions and objectives of the writers concerned. Hence, the history of, say, a war will be differently perceived by each opposing side, as will the histories of political or religious disputes. The formal overall history that one learns is, therefore, that which has been approved by one’s governing establishment. It is authorized, countenanced, sanctioned and academically warranted, but it is not necessarily the explicit truth – it is truth tempered by partisan interpretation and subjective opinion.

When documentary record is related to matters of science, then it is automatically constrained by ongoing research, and it can only communicate the facts as they are known at the time of writing. Only a few decades ago, it was (as far as anyone knew) quite impossible to converse with someone thousands of miles away. It was equally impossible to fly over the oceans, or to watch relayed coverage of live events from around the world. Now, such things are not only possible but commonplace, and the coming century will undoubtedly hold its own share of possibilities that were hitherto regarded as impossible.

By virtue of this, history cannot afford to be dogmatic; it can only record given points of view at given points in time because there are always areas of uncertainty, and elements of the unknown which have to be conceded. When some huge, unfathomable bones were unearthed in China 2000 years ago they were recorded as being the bones of a dragon, for it was traditionally thought that a great dragon’s tail had marked the river channels which drained the land in primeval times.⁵ We now know these to be dinosaur bones, but the people of the era could not possibly

have identified them as such because they had no knowledge that dinosaurs ever existed. In fact, everything that we know today about dinosaurs and their environment has been learned since the 1820s. (Their name comes from the Greek *deinos-saurus*, meaning ‘terrible lizard’.)

Sometimes, for want of any comparative record, certain documented information is taken on board as history until a related and perhaps contradictory discovery sheds new light on the subject. In this regard, the Old Testament of the Jewish and Christian Bibles holds a primary position, for, just like the Chinese dinosaur bones, no one had access to any more specific information through the same 2000 years. The Old Testament as we have come to know it was a largely retrospective work, first compiled between the sixth and second centuries BC, but relating to the events of hundreds and even thousands of years before. There are references within the Old Testament to a number of material sources, but since these earlier works have not been available, the best that generations of people could do was to take the scripture as read, to treat it as being symbolic, or perhaps to ignore it altogether. The difference between the Bible and much other history lies, however, in the word ‘scripture’, for the Old Testament was not only a work of ancestral record, but became the basis for an evolving, widespread religious doctrine.

It was not until the 1850s that documentary evidence of pre-biblical history first came to light, and this was followed twenty years later by some published texts. Not until the late 1920s were the first in-depth translations released into the public domain – translations of scribal record considerably older than the original Old Testament. As the archaeologists progressed their excavations, these ancient clay tablets and engraved cylinders emerged in their tens of thousands from the very Bible lands of Adam, Noah and Abraham, and they were, in large measure, contemporary with the Old Testament’s patriarchal and dynastic eras. More importantly, and perhaps surprisingly to some, many of their accounts were immediately familiar, and it soon became obvious that these were the models for stories written down in retrospect by the Israelite compilers of Genesis.

Throughout the best part of the common era, these informative texts had been hidden, unbeknown to anyone, beneath the Mesopotamian and Syrian deserts, and their discovery (like the discovery of dinosaurs) should have been greeted with enthusiasm by all – but it was not. The historical accounts were familiar, and the characters and places were

recognizable as being the Old Testament prototypes, but the literal emphases were so different from the approved scripture that indoctrinated society and its governing authorities felt immediately threatened.

Quite suddenly, it was clear that the long-supposed authentic history of the Bible was not authentic at all: it had been contrived by adjusting original records to suit an emergent religious movement from 2500 years ago. This movement, at first a localized sectarian Hebrew cult, had subsequently expanded into mainstream Judaism and then branched off into Christianity, with the Old Testament becoming a common factor of teaching. But what had also transpired was that this series of books (originally compiled to underpin a cultural doctrine in troubled times) had become a repository of established dogma, which had itself become regarded as absolute history.

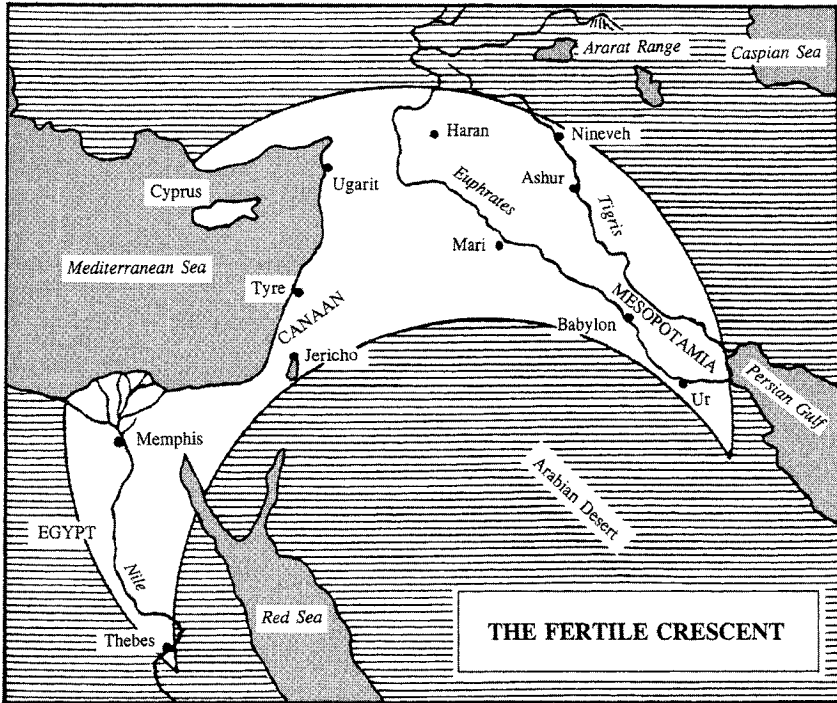
As previously stated, history cannot afford to be dogmatic, but it was too late: the die had been cast through religious application. Even now, the dogma of contrived scriptural history is still taught in our schoolrooms and churches, while the original documents from which the scripture was constructed are ignored. This is particularly unfortunate because the more ancient documents are far more explicit than the Old Testament in their detailing of the patriarchal era. In these texts, the Bible stories are not only placed in a better chronological context, but their social and political relevance becomes far more understandable.

The Fertile Crescent

In our quest for the Messianic Dragon heritage we shall be delving back to the ancient origins of the kingly tradition – back into the distant world of Genesis, to the time of Adam and beyond. In order to set the scene, it is first necessary to establish our geographical base, since Old Testament history spans three distinct regions: Mesopotamia (the land encompassed by present-day Iraq), Canaan (Palestine) and Egypt. This overall territory, with the Mediterranean Sea bordering Egypt and Canaan, includes three great rivers: in the west is the north-flowing Nile, while in the east the Tigris and Euphrates run south into the Persian Gulf.

From about 10,000 BC, towards the end of the last Ice Age, this Near Eastern land mass was especially suited to irrigation, particularly in its river plateau and delta regions. In consequence, it was the earliest cradle

GENESIS OF THE GRAIL KINGS



Map 1

of civilization and, for reasons of both culture and agriculture, it has been dubbed the Fertile Crescent.

In Mesopotamia, the temperate, moist conditions gave rise to large tracts of open woodland, and a variety of long grasses were developed to produce barley and wheat on a large scale. Harvesting of cereal crops can also be traced back to Canaan in about 10,000 BC, to northern Syria around 9000 BC and to the Jordan valley in 8000 BC. As the cereal and grain culture advanced by way of improved seeding, fertilization and ripening methods, so too were pulses and legumes (such as peas and lentils) cultivated. In this well-nurtured grazing environment certain

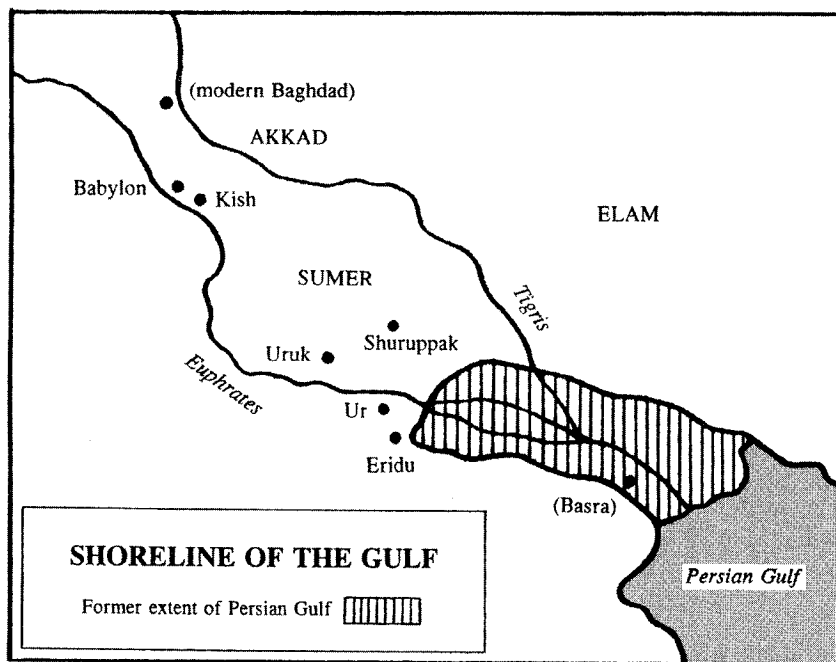
animals were tamed and herded, with gazelles and goats being the primary meat providers, while the latter were also used for milking. Sheep farming was additionally popular in northern Mesopotamia from about 9000 BC, and from around 6000 BC pigs, dogs and cattle were also domesticated.

Throughout this period, the local farming communities were settled into villages and townships, with houses commonly built of mud brick. The settlements were often set upon hills, surrounded by trenches for protection against wild animals, and the domestic herds were further sheltered within wooden stockades. Because of the extensive grain crop, stone-grinding was an early introduction, as was the manufacture and use of pottery, and trade between communities was also encouraged. To expedite this trade, various natural resources were frequently used as means of exchange, particularly decorative items such as volcanic glass, shells and semi-precious stones.⁶

The era from 8000 BC was that which we generally classify as the New Stone Age, but soon after 6500 BC the advanced culture of the Fertile Crescent had moved into the Bronze Age – the first age of metallurgy wherein copper was alloyed with tin to produce the highly durable bronze. The singularly impressive level of Near Eastern advancement becomes apparent when one realizes that, in contrast, the oldest pottery unearthed in Britain dates back only to about 2500 BC, and the earliest barley farming commenced about half a century later. Britain did not enter her Bronze Age until the Belgic tribes arrived in about 2000 BC.

By 6000 BC, the people of the Mesopotamian Near East were using ships on the open sea, while Britain was still 4000 years away from a simple weaving industry. It therefore comes as no surprise that the most prominent stories of earthly beginnings emerged from the Bible lands of the Fertile Crescent, for as far as the people of those lands were concerned, the outside world was still asleep in a forlorn and primitive environment. Indeed, it can be said with no reserve whatever that cultural history certainly began in those very countries described in the book of Genesis. (The title ‘Genesis’ was introduced by Greek Bible translators in the third century BC, and relates to ‘origin’ or ‘beginning’. The Hebrew opening for the book was ‘*Bereshit*’ (B’rei-shêeth): ‘At the beginning’.⁷)

It is not until we reach the nineteenth patriarchal generation of the Genesis account that Canaan and Egypt begin to feature in the narrative. This occurs after Abraham’s emigration from his native Mesopotamia. And so, it is in Mesopotamia that our story must begin – in southern



Map 2

Mesopotamia to be precise, for in Genesis (11:31) we are told that Abraham (originally called Avram or Abram) came from Ur of the Chaldees. Earlier biblical references (back to the time of Adam) cement the family's tradition very firmly in the Tigris–Euphrates region above the Persian Gulf.

The name Mesopotamia means 'Land between the Rivers', and it was technically the country between the Tigris and Euphrates. But, geographically, the Mesopotamian boundaries enveloped these two rivers from the northern Taurus Mountains down to the Gulf. Northern Mesopotamia is perhaps better known as Assyria, while the central region was called Akkad (wherein sits present-day Baghdad, north of Babylon). Soon after 4000 BC, southern Mesopotamia was identified as Sumer (pronounced 'Shumer'),⁸ and it was here that the early patriarchs prevailed.

One of the foremost cities of ancient Sumer was Uruk (modern-day Warka), from which derived the country's eventual name of Iraq. South-east of Uruk was the city of Ur in the Sumerian region of Chaldea (the Chaldees). These days, the Persian Gulf sweeps below Iraq to Iran (Persia) from northern Kuwait, but in those early times the Gulf

extended a good deal further inland, so that Ur was practically on the coast.

The word 'city' is not used lightly in this context, for these important centres were undeniably cities from about 3800 BC, and Uruk, with its great temple, was the first true city on Earth. Municipal society with community councils had actually evolved from about 5500 BC, when the farming Halafans of Tel Halaf introduced cobbled streets and drainage systems more than 3000 years before the primitive Stonehenge is reckoned to have been constructed in Britain – at which time Western Europeans had barely invented the crude wooden plough. In the Mesopotamian town of Arpachiya there were large beehive-shaped public buildings called *tholoi*, measuring on average about 32 feet (10m) in diameter. One of the main Halafan communities (near subsequent Ur) was established as a delta settlement at Ubaid, a noted centre of metallurgy and pottery, and nearby emerged Sumer's most sacred city of Eridu. Other important cities of the area were Kish, Nippur, Erech, Lagesh and Larsa, and, just as today's cities are distinguished by their great cathedrals, so too did these highly cultural centres have their richly decorated skyward temples.

It will perhaps have been noticed that, although Mesopotamia was a world leader in numerous aspects from around 10,000 BC, there appears to have been a very marked further advancement from about 4000 BC when southern Mesopotamia became identified as Sumer and the truly municipal cities flourished. By that time they were formally recognized as city-states which operated as individual kingdoms, and it is the story of the amazing rise of Sumer which provides the very thrust of the patriarchal narrative in Genesis. This sudden cultural expansion was not simply a matter of general evolvement; it was a mighty technical and academic revolution which has long baffled scholars and historians worldwide.

LIKE MIGRATING BIRDS

The Adamite Chronicles

It is now time to consult our Bibles and to consider the Genesis text with ancient Sumer in mind. In so doing, we should think also about the natural evolutionary process of the wider world arena, and of how (from 4000–2000 BC) Sumerian society surged ahead of the natural process by thousands of years. We shall look at the individual details of this surge and its specific implications later on, but for the time being we should remember that, were it not for the extraordinary lead provided in old Mesopotamia, our present civilized culture would not exist in the form that we know it today.

In current times, in various parts of the world, there are still many tribes of bushmen and the like whose lives, although disciplined, are very primitive by our accepted standards. It is said that this has happened because they are sheltered from the world at large. But what is the world at large? These people have certainly not been sheltered from evolution because, according to scientists, evolution is a natural ongoing process. By virtue of their environment these people are the very epitome of natural evolution, but that evolution has sustained them in a protracted Stone Age culture.

In his *Earth Chronicles*, the eminent scholar Zecharia Sitchin makes the point that the real puzzle lies not in the backwardness of the bushmen, but in our own advancement. It took man over a million years to progress from using stones as he found them to the realization that they could be chipped and flaked to better purpose. It then took another

500,000 years before Neanderthal man mastered the concept of stone tools, and a further 50,000 years before crops were cultivated and metallurgy was discovered. Such was the long and arduous natural process which brought humankind to about 5000 BC. Hence, by all scales of evolutionary reckoning, we should still be far removed from any basic understanding of mathematics, engineering or science – but here we are, only 7000 years later, landing probes on Mars.

In real terms, the bushmen are the true inheritors of nature's own slow progression. It is we of the 'civilized' races who have advanced far ahead of spontaneous evolution by way of our strategically applied wisdom. But this cannot have taken place by accident: we cannot invent wisdom – it has to be acquired and inherited. So, how did we inherit wisdom, and from whom? As we shall discover, the answer is to be found in the preserved texts of ancient Sumer – and in relating the story of Adam and Eve, the Bible calls the source of this advanced wisdom the 'Tree of Knowledge' (Genesis 2:9).

Ever since Charles Darwin published his *Descent of Man* in 1871, a dispute has prevailed over whether humankind evolved by a gradual process through millions of years, or whether Adam and Eve were the first mortals, created by God, as told in the Old Testament book of Genesis.

If we discount the entire evolutionary process from the most primitive anthropoids of 30 million years ago, we still end up with positive proof that Neanderthal man existed before 70,000 BC. This race became extinct after some 40,000 years, and in the meantime Cro-Magnon man had appeared by 35,000 BC, thus beginning the era of *Homo sapiens* ('thinking man' – from the Latin *sapientia*, meaning wisdom) with his art, clothing and community structure. So, if we presume that Adam was indeed the first man (or even symbolically representative of the first man), then with which date should we credit him: 35,000 BC, 70,000 BC or somewhere before that?

In 1996, Pope John Paul II claimed that the theory of evolution was 'more than a hypothesis'. He made this statement at a conference of the Papal Academy of Sciences, and it set the religious world thinking. How could the writings of Darwin and Genesis be compatible? As a result, Cardinal John O'Connor of New York announced at St Patrick's Cathedral that perhaps Adam and Eve were not human after all, but some form of lower animal. Before long, numerous members of the High Christian establishment were questioning their traditional interpretation of the biblical text. But were they perhaps overreacting?

The fact is that Genesis positively describes Adam as a ‘man’ – a thinking man no less, and in terms of general earthly evolution, the text is seemingly quite accurate, even though chronologically ambiguous with its account of the ‘six days’ of Creation. In line with Darwin and others,¹ Genesis tells that prior to man (Adam) there were plants, fish, birds and animals (1:11–25), and these various life-forms are detailed in a scientifically logical progression, with humankind ultimately gaining dominion over the others (1:28). The story of Adam was not the prerogative of the early Hebrew writers, for his details were set down in writing long before Genesis was compiled. Nevertheless, the sequence of events portrayed in Genesis appears wholly in line with geological and archaeological discovery, except for the reality of a more general long-term evolutionary process.

In Genesis, the emergence of Adam is sudden, but that apart, he is emphatically described as a rather unique form of human who followed the early life-forms. This, of course, takes Adam and Eve out of the realms of Cardinal O’Connor’s ‘lower animal’ speculation, but it still does not give them a date. We are left, therefore, with our original dilemma, and if we separate Adam from the unintelligent anthropoids such as *Homo habilis* (c.2 million BC) and *Homo erectus* (c.1 million BC), the question remains: was Adam a prehistoric Neanderthal or a later Cro-Magnon man?

The fact that Adam is credited with the knowledge of good and evil, having eaten from the tree that made him wise (Genesis 3:6), determines that he was of the strain called *Homo sapiens*. In practice, he would actually have been of the further advanced modern strain called *Homo sapiens-sapiens*. Adam’s date, consequently, falls into a post-35,000 BC category. But the Neanderthals and others preceded this era, so how could Adam be said to be the ‘first’ man? Of what particular strain was he the first?

In historical terms, Adam can be identified rather more precisely than in the Genesis account, and in making this identification his biblical heritage is not lost, for he was certainly the first of a kind. Before pursuing this, however, we should consider the Genesis chronology in greater depth so that Adam and Eve can be cemented into a more reliable time-frame.

In Christian Church theology, Adam is generally dated at 4004 BC, and this has been the case since AD 1650 when Ireland’s Protestant Archbishop, James Ussher of Armagh, published his famous *Annales Veteris Testamenti*. His method of calculation was very straightforward,

being based on the said ages of the early patriarchs when they fathered their respective sons in the Bible's key succession (*see* Chart: Biblical Ages of the Early Patriarchs, p.248). Genesis tells that Adam was aged 130 when his son Seth was born; Seth was 105 when he fathered Enos; Enos was 90 at the birth of Cainan, and so on. To that point (Adam to Cainan) 325 years had passed. Progressing then from Cainan to Noah adds another 731 years, and from Noah to Abraham another 890 years – a total of 1946 years from the emergence of Adam to the birth of Abraham. In such a calculation, the great final ages of the individual patriarchs (with Methuselah living for 969 years) are quite irrelevant: only their procreational ages are important.

Genesis gives us nineteen complete generations from Adam to Abraham, and 1946 years divided by 19 indicates an average generation standard of about 102 years, as against the thirty-year average standard that is applied today. It is easy enough for a sceptical mind to dismiss the given longevity of the early patriarchs, but let us not be too hasty in this regard, for intuitive scepticism is the best route to learning absolutely nothing. The main problem with Ussher's tabular method was that at some point the resultant age totals had to be counted back from the date of some historical event and the first such date given by Ussher is 2348 BC, said to be the year of the biblical Flood.²

If we go back to the birth of Noah, midway in the Adam-to-Abraham list, we see that 1056 years had passed from the advent of Adam. Genesis tells that Noah was aged 600 at the time of the great Flood. So, according to Genesis, the Flood was (1056 + 600) 1656 years after the emergence of Adam. According to Ussher, the biblical Flood was in 2348 BC, and so if we go back 1656 years from then we get to 4004 BC, which is the standard date for Adam by the Christian reckoning. Only two centuries ago, in 1779, the Church-approved *Universal History* went so far as to say that God's work of Creation actually began on 21 September 4004 BC!³

In 1654, more than a century before the *Universal History*, the Vatican Council had decreed that anyone daring to contradict the 4004 BC date was a heretic, an attitude that was not relaxed until Pope Pius XII addressed the 1952 Papal Academy of Sciences in Rome. In this address, he announced that theologians must not ignore the discoveries of geological science, and that it was clear that the Earth had existed for thousands of millions of years. In making this statement, Pope Pius maintained that time was not really a factor in the Bible's Creation story because the six days of Creation were symbolic, and that, despite all